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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT)

Political Developments: An "inner circle" of nine senior generals--apparently active for the past two years--intends to exercise decision-making powers over any elected government, [redacted]

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[redacted]
The generals believe that the current state of the war and the state of political and social development of the people preclude the establishment of a "full" democracy at this time. In their view, the country must now be "assisted and guided" through a transition period toward democracy.

The "inner circle" reportedly consists of Chief of State Thieu, Premier Ky, Chairman of the Joint General Staff Vien, the four corps commanders, Security Minister Vien, and Revolutionary Development Minister Thang. Directorate Secretary-General Chieu, Police Director Loan, and Information Minister Tri, who are normally identified with the military leadership, evidently are not members of the group.

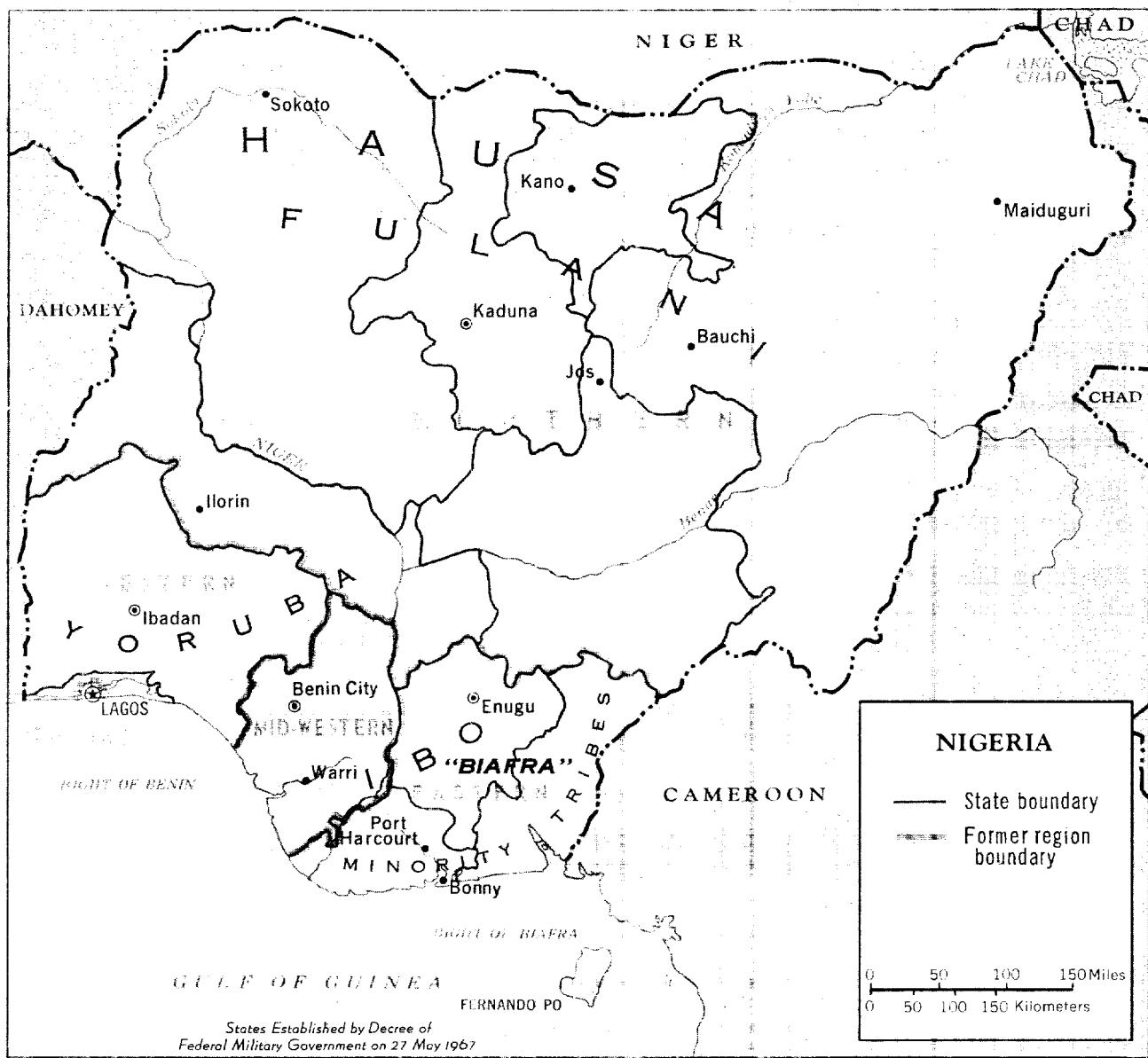
The Military Situation: There have been a number of low-level reports in recent weeks that enemy forces are preparing to launch 140-mm. and other rocket attacks on targets in the vicinity of Saigon before the national elections on 3 September. One agent report states that attacks are planned on 19 August and 2 September against the air base and headquarters complex at Tan Son Nhut. Aside from an evident intent to destroy Allied facilities and equipment, the Communists would also hope to achieve considerable psychological shock value from such attacks against heavily populated areas.

South Vietnamese Regional Forces in Quang Tin Province suffered heavy casualties--40 killed, eight wounded, and 28 missing--as the result of several enemy attacks on 9 August in an area northwest of Chu Lai. Enemy losses were 16 killed. Elsewhere in South Vietnam, US forces conducting 13 large-scale operations reported only light and sporadic contact on 9-10 August.

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Nigeria: Control of Nigeria's Mid-Western state by the invading Biafrans and their local allies appears practically complete.

The invasion force led by Lt. Col. Banjo--a Western Yoruba serving with the Biafran Army--may have crossed into the Western state, but it is unclear how far the Biafran troops intend to go. Contact with the federal battalion advancing from Lagos and the one coming from Ibadan has not yet been reported.

In seizing the Mid-Western state, Biafra's Ojukwu has gained control over the onshore oil fields and installations in that state, as well as the small ports along the coast. Ojukwu probably hopes to gain support from the Western Yorubas by bringing the civil war closer to the Yoruba people, who in the past have wanted to be free of rule by the Northern-dominated federal government. Banjo has already informed the Mid-Western people that his forces are only there to free the state from Northern rule.

Gowon seems intent on maintaining military pressure within Biafra along the northern border and on the coast. Initially at least, he has moved only to contain the Biafran invasion in the Mid-West. The federal government recently has received additional military equipment, including two jet trainers from Czechoslovakia and a shipment of antiaircraft guns from London. In addition, there are reports that some equipment, including other aircraft, may soon arrive from Moscow.

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NOTES

Hong Kong - Communist China: British authorities are concerned over a new Communist tactic of broadcasting inflammatory propaganda by loudspeaker from Chinese Communist ships bringing food to the colony. They are reluctant to take police action that might jeopardize the food supply. Propaganda from Peking continues to imply that the Hong Kong population bears the primary responsibility for carrying out the struggle against the British. [redacted]

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*France: De Gaulle's radio-TV address on 10 August reaffirmed his determination not to be swayed by "foreign influences" or domestic pressures from achieving independence of action for France. The French President's recital of past accomplishments seemed designed to rally discontented Gaullists and to draw attention away from unpopular social and economic reforms in the face of widespread opposition to such reforms and criticism of his recent handling of foreign affairs. Although a recent poll indicates the General's popularity has dropped sharply, he still commands the support of 55 percent of the French people. [redacted]

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*Cuba: Fidel Castro's three-hour speech, closing the first Latin American Solidarity Organization (LASO) conference, contained the usual anti-US diatribes and called for "armed struggle" in Latin America. Praising US Black Power advocate Stokely Carmichael, Castro predicted that the US would soon face an internal revolution. The Cuban Prime Minister then praised the ideological victory of "armed struggle" advocates during the LASO proceedings and restated the conference's theme: "the duty of every revolutionary is to make revolution." [redacted]

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